

Week Ending Friday, March 3, 2000

**Statement on Assistance to
Communities Struck by
Hurricane Floyd**
February 25, 2000

When Hurricane Floyd hit communities on the eastern seaboard nearly 6 months ago, it left many thousands homeless, destroyed countless businesses, and caused severe loss of crops. While this storm took a terrible toll, hard-hit communities have shown determination and courage as they have made great efforts to rebuild. It is our job to help them, and today I am asking Congress to provide an additional \$347 million to do so.

These funds include essential assistance to farmers who have suffered crop loss, to help to construct low income rural housing, and to provide some 2,000 housing vouchers for families displaced from their homes. I am also asking Congress to fund a feasibility study for the historic Princeville, North Carolina, to best determine options to protect this culturally significant town from future flooding.

We have already made \$2.6 billion available in grants and loans to help the victims of Hurricane Floyd. I urge Congress to approve my request today for additional funding in order to support the efforts of hard-pressed communities as they continue to rebuild and to bring to nearly \$3 billion total funds available to them.

NOTE: A portion of the President's statement was also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Statement on Signing the Poison
Control Center Enhancement and
Awareness Act**
February 25, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign a bipartisan bill that will help save lives by giving families

immediate access to vital information about poison control. Each year, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to the Nation's poison control centers, and more than half of the victims are young children. The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act authorizes \$140 million over the next 5 years to fund the Nation's poison control centers, carry out a national media campaign, and establish a national toll-free telephone poison control hotline to give callers immediate information if there is an accident in the home. This new funding will help provide vital resources and information to inform the public about poison control and assist parents in protecting the health and safety of their children.

NOTE: S. 632, approved February 25, was assigned Public Law No. 106-174. A portion of the President's statement was also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Statement on Emergency Assistance
to Fishing Communities**
February 25, 2000

Due to the decline in important fishing stocks on the west and east coasts, many fishing communities are suffering unexpected losses that seriously threaten their livelihoods. In Long Island Sound, the lobster catch has fallen sharply this year. On the west coast, in Oregon, Washington, and California, there has been a serious decline in groundfish stocks.

The economic threat to fishing communities is severe. I am asking Congress to provide emergency assistance of \$56 million to provide aid to those whose economic welfare is threatened by this crisis and to fund research to identify the causes and potential solutions to these problems to restore the long-term health of our vital fishing industry.